

From: Hoenes, Brock D(DFW)
Sent: Tuesday, January 29, 2013 9:59 AM
To: pudfella@willapabay.org
Cc: SEPADesk (DFW)
Subject: RE: comment on Hoenes corvid lethal take

Dear Mr. Puddicombe,

First, thank you for your interest and commitment to the recovery of the Western snowy plover along Washington's coastline. Secondly, on behalf of WDFW I would like to express my appreciation for the manpower the Willapa Hills Audubon Society has provided to assist with the recovery of this species.

WDFW also recognizes the need to further reduce human caused disturbances in critical snowy plover nesting areas and plans to implement two initiatives during the 2013 nesting season to address that need. The first will be an enforcement emphasis patrol during peak-use weekends (i.e. clam-dig weekends and major holidays). WDFW will be partnering with the USFWS to cover the costs associated with the additional enforcement presence during those times. The second will be partnering with the USFWS to provide portable restrooms during scheduled clam-digs at Leadbetter Beach. Most human encroachments at Leadbetter occur because there are no restrooms in the immediate vicinity where the clam-digs occur. The USFWS provided portable restrooms in 2012 and this reduced the number of "diggers" who entered the snowy plover nesting area. Our hope is that in conjunction with an increased enforcement presence during the 2013 season, human disturbance will be almost completely eliminated. At this point in time, WDFW has no plans to limit vehicular traffic at Leadbetter during clam-dig weekends. However, if human disturbances are identified as a limiting factor, despite the previously mentioned efforts, then it may be an option that needs to be considered in the future.

Again, thank you for your interest and commitment to the recovery of the Western snowy plover in Washington. Feel free to contact me anytime if you have any future concerns.

Thank you,

Brock Hoenes

District Wildlife Biologist
Pacific and Grays Harbor Counties
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
48 Devonshire Road
Montesano, WA 98563
Phone: (360)-249-4628 ext. 238
Email: Brock.Hoenes@dfw.wa.gov
Fax: (360)-249-1229

From: steve puddicombe [<mailto:pudfella@willapabay.org>]
Sent: Saturday, January 26, 2013 1:49 PM

To: SEPADesk (DFW)

Subject: comment on Hoenes corvid lethal take

Willapa Hills Audubon Society

P.O. Box 399, Longview, WA 98632-7255

Bob Zeigler

SEPA Responsible Official

360/ 902-2578

Habitat Program

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

600 Capitol Way North

Olympia, WA 98501-1091

Mr Zeigler,

Willapa Hills Audubon has had an ongoing relationship with state, fed and county officials over the years in an effort to maintain and improve the numbers of snowy plovers in the several known nesting sites in Pacific County. Volunteers helped count birds and nest sites, worked to make the nest sites viable by pulling the non-native grasses and in monitoring eggs and hatchlings. Even with the use of protective devices and every method possible to insure the survival of hatchlings, we must note that survival into adulthood has been virtually nill. Predation by corvids has been a major part of the reason for this fact. Therefore, if the SNPL is to survive as a species along the WA coast we reluctantly agree with the proposal put forward by biologist Hoenes, that the removal of predators, including corvids, by lethal means may be necessary.

Our one caveat is that it is our opinion that further measures need to be taken to reduce human contact with SNPL nest sites during nesting season; and strongly recommend intervention of some sort (volunteer "protectors" at nesting sites for instance) especially during the clam openings that

occur at Leadbetter, and closing off vehicle traffic near the nesting sites even during the infrequent clam dig openings. At this juncture we believe all means should be employed to protect the nesting sites from human encroachment, particularly with the knowledge that corvid activity is increased when humans are present.

Thank you for allowing our comment—we will appreciate any response.

Sincerely,

Steve Puddicombe

Co-chair, Conservation Committee

WHAS